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INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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RHMFISS/EUCOM POLAD VAHINGEN GE PRIORITY
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RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY
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RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 000911

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/12/2028
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: TURKEY-IRAQ: TURKEY RETALIATES AGAINST PKK ATTACK
ON TURKISH MILITARY FACILITY

Classified By: Acting DCM Kimberly Deblauw, for Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

Turkish Air and Artillery Strikes

¶1. (S) Following a May 9 PKK attack against a Turkish jandarma border post in Hakkari province that killed several Turkish soldiers, Turkish artillery and warplanes launched strikes on May 10 targeting suspected PKK facilities and PKK elements fleeing into northern Iraq following the attack. Turkish operations began with artillery strikes from 1100 to 1200 local time on May 10, followed by airstrikes from 1800 to 2000 hours local time. Turkish General Staff (TGS) officials provided approximately one hour advance notice to U.S. personnel via the Ankara Coordination Directorate (in our Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) in Ankara), for each of the strikes allowing battlespace to be deconflicted.

¶2. (S) The Turkish air operations were carried out against a variety of targets near the Turkey-Iraq border extending from Haftanin to Hakurk. The airstrikes targeting the Haftanin region were carried out by two F-16s, while the broader airstrikes targeting an array of suspected PKK positions in Avi Shin, Zap, and Harkurk were carried out by seven F-16s and six F-4 fighters.

Turkish General Staff Announcements

¶3. (U) The TGS published three notices providing context to the May 10 strikes on its website. The first, a press statement on May 10, reported on the results of the May 1-2 strikes against PKK targets in the Qandil mountains. It stated that intelligence sources have confirmed that the May 1 and 2 air operations in the Qandil region dealt "a serious blow to the PKK." According to this notice, terrorists numbering approximately 200 fled from Qandil to other areas following the May 1-2 strikes. The notice highlighted the attempts by several senior PKK members to flee, including Cemil Bayik and another codenamed "Bahoz." The notice stated that Bayik had fled to a neighboring country (Note: presumably Iran. End Note) together with a "large group of terrorists," and that a majority of his bodyguards were killed during a fire fight with that country's security forces. The notice interpreted the PKK attack against a military outpost in Hakkari on May 9 as an act of desperation, and said the Turkish military responded immediately to the attack. According to the notice, two members of Turkey's security forces were killed in the May 9 PKK attack (a subsequent TGS statement on May 10 stated that

four additional members of the Turkish security forces were killed in the attack, for a total of six personnel killed).

14. (U) A second notice, posted on the TGS website early May 11, provided a brief account of the May 10 strikes, stating that the Turkish military conducted successful air and artillery strikes against PKK/Kongra-Gel targets in the Avashin-Basyan regions of northern Iraq on May 10 in response to a PKK attack against a Turkish military outpost in Hakkari. The statement emphasized that operations were targeted solely against the PKK/Kongra-Gel terror organization and not against civilians in northern Iraq or local groups which have not committed any hostile acts. A third notice on May 11 noted that the May 10 airstrikes also destroyed a PKK/Kongra-Gel press and propaganda center.

Media Reaction to Strikes

15. (U) Turkish media reaction to the strikes has been muted thus far. Some newspapers summarized the TGS announcements, while another covered the funerals of the six soldiers killed during the May 9 PKK attack. The English edition of Zaman (Today's Zaman), included in its report on the strikes comments attributed to General Petraeus warning that again targeting the Qandil mountains would be "going too far."

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